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Spence arrested in N.Y., released

Bizarre interview is no night on the town

By Jerry Seper and Michael Hedges
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

NEW YORK — He must have thought he was still wearing his red-lined black cape, his wide-brimmed black felt hat and his trademark silk handkerchief dangling at a precise angle from his tailored Edwardian-cut suit.

His plain white knit shirt was wrinkled and soiled, with smudge marks on the back and shoulders from a night on a bench in Central Park. His high-top white Reebok athletic shoes were scuffed, his pants rumpled and loose.

With his belt missing, an unshaven Craig J. Spence — the one-

time Washington lobbyist of the rich and powerful who is a focus of a federal investigation — kept tugging at his pleated khaki pants to keep them from falling down.

"Do you know who you are talking to?" he demanded in a loud voice as he moved his back along a wall of a friend's fashionable East Side apartment, his right hand tightly clutching a razor-blade dispenser from which he slid a double-edged blade. "Do you have any idea who I am?"

So began a rambling, eight-hour interview of Craig Spence, the object of a monthlong search by print and television reporters and agents of the Secret Service. The

see SPENCE, page A10



Photo by Peter Kolik/Special to The Washington Times
Craig J. Spence

Once-host to powerful reduced to begging, sleeping in park

By Michael Hedges and Jerry Seper
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

NEW YORK — Craig J. Spence, the once-powerful Washington lobbyist under scrutiny by the Secret Service for late-night White House tours and theft from the presidential mansion, was arrested here last week for carrying a loaded gun and crack cocaine.

Mr. Spence, who has spent recent weeks prowling this city's finest hotels, cutting deals with inmates to protect himself in jail and eventually sleeping on a bench in Central Park, faces up to eight years in prison.

Monday, in a tense eight-hour interview with The Washington Times

at a friend's apartment where reporters had tracked him, Mr. Spence said the discovery in 1986 that he had AIDS triggered his descent into using call boys and crack.

In a conversation that plumbed the depths of morbidity and self-pity, Mr. Spence caressed a shiny, double-edged razor blade he said he would ultimately use to kill himself and alluded frequently to his impending suicide, a move he said he would take before AIDS debilitates him.

Asked how he thought he would be remembered in Washington, he quoted Carl Sandburg: "Does it matter in the dust and the cool tombs..."

Mr. Spence said he left Washington early in July after becoming

aware — through news accounts — of the Secret Service investigation. He spent several nights in expensive hotels in New York, rapidly spending his diminishing funds, according to hotel records and his account.

He was arrested July 31 at the Barbizon Hotel on East 63rd Street in Manhattan. According to police records, police took Mr. Spence into custody after a disturbance there. A loaded 9mm pistol was seized, along with a small amount of crack.

He spent parts of the next three days in jail before being released on personal recognizance Aug. 2. He faces another hearing Aug. 28. Maximum sentences for the charges

see ARREST, page A10

A BLOODY NIGHT IN D.C.

Police to work overtime as street violence heats up

By Adam Sommers
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

D.C. Police launched a counter-attack last night to an onslaught of violence that, most recently, left four persons dead in a span of four hours beginning about 1 a.m. yesterday.

Officers working the 3-to-11 p.m. shift were told they "will be held over until the early morning hours" in order to put more police in the city's most violent neighborhoods, said Officer Gary Hankins, Labor Committee chairman of the Fraternal Order of Police.

"We are going to work some people beyond their regular tour of duty," Lt. Reginald Smith, a police spokesman, confirmed yesterday. He said the officers probably will work four extra hours, until 3 a.m.

Police believe part of the recent violence can be blamed on one juvenile — 16-year-old Maurice Winston Morris of the 1700 block of Montana Avenue NE.

Police are holding him in connection with the fatal shooting early yesterday of Eric D. King, 16, of the 1700 block of Montana Avenue NE.

He is also a suspect in the shooting death of a Northeast resident July 15 and the shooting and wounding of both a Northeast man at the Capitol City Inn on Sunday and a Silver Spring man on July 3. The inn serves as a city homeless shelter.

Judy Smith, a spokeswoman with the U.S. Attorney's Office, said a hearing for Maurice was delayed yesterday in D.C. Superior Court to give him an opportunity to confer with his attorney. He was held without bond pending a hearing today.

Aside from the most recent killings and woundings, police sources said violence has been on the rise in the District for several weeks — and

that much of it appears to be linked to an influx of New York and Jamaican drug dealers.

Officer Hankins said he welcomed the plan to extend police hours, initiated by Police Chief Isaac Fulwood as one of his first official acts since taking the top job Aug. 1. The overtime will last about a week, Officer Hankins said.

"As long as the officers are getting paid overtime, the plan is fine with us," he said.

The overtime pay will come out of the department's budget, but Lt. Smith said he could not provide a dollar amount.

He characterized the overtime patrols as "a change in tactics" needed to address a recent upsurge in violence but said he could give no reason for the upsurge.

One veteran detective in the 6th Police District said recent convictions and long jail sentences for major drug dealers who controlled lucrative markets in Northeast have created a power vacuum.

The territory is being fought over by other dealers, he said, and "the only way they can claim those areas is with guns."

In particular,

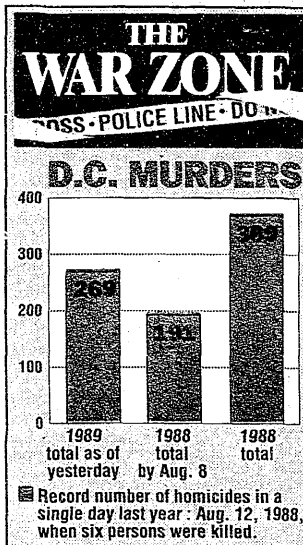
drug dealers have been fighting over lucrative drug markets in the Minnesota Avenue corridor and near the Mayfair Mansions apartments, the detective said.

Officials said those areas had been controlled by Michael Palmer, 27, of New York, the leader of a cocaine network that netted about \$8 million a year. He was convicted in U.S. District Court here July 17 under a new drug-kingpin statute that requires him to serve a life sentence.

Three other persons convicted in the case got sentences of 15 years to life.

see KILLINGS, page B8

• Related stories on page B1.



Graphic by Henry Christopher / The Washington Times



Photo by Ross D. Franklin/The Washington Times



Top, homicide victim Eric King's cousin, Tony Rogers, (left) and uncle, Raymond Anderson, console each other. Eric, 16, was gunned down early yesterday behind the Northeast public housing complex where he lived. Above, D.C. police examine a car in which two unidentified men were shot dead in Southeast hours after Eric's slaying.

Don't play 'Misty' for forecasters' critic

By David Braaten
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

The scorn clouds gathered yesterday over a Cincinnati tourism flack who suggested media weather forecasters change their tune to accentuate the positive and eliminate the "negative mindset" that causes people to stay home.

The response from media types varied in tone from derision to high moral dudgeon, but was universally negative.

Even the National Weather Service's local chief, playing Mr. In-between, called it "one of those things that seems like a good idea until you do it."

The thunder and lightning started

when Mike Rozow, spokesman for the Greater Cincinnati Convention and Visitors Bureau, sent a two-page letter to the weather service and local TV and radio stations asking them to look on the sunny side.

They might, he suggested, try "emphasizing that a 30 percent chance of rain means there is a whopping 70 percent chance it will not rain." He reminded them that "partly cloudy" could just as easily be phrased as "partly sunny."

Furthermore, he wrote, "statements such as 'It is miserably hot and humid,' when in fact it is perfectly normal for that time of year, create a negative mindset and may

see HAPPY, page A10



Death of hope

Maj. Robin Higgins says she believes her husband was killed. Stories, A3, A8.

Plane-sighting report buoys hunt for Leland

By Marc Lerner and Chris Harvey
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Ethiopian air rescuers, buoyed by sketchy reports of a sighting of a missing plane carrying Rep. Mickey Leland and eight other Americans, yesterday requested U.S. aircraft for a search now entering its third day.

Mr. Leland, a 44-year-old Texas Democrat who is chairman of House Select Committee on Hunger, and 13 others have been missing since Monday when their 20-seat Twin Otter took off in rough weather for the 480-mile flight from the Ethiopian capital of Addis Ababa to Fugnido refugee camp on the Ethiopian-Sudanese border. A medical evac-

uation plane from the U.S. European Command was scheduled to leave for Addis Ababa this morning, a Defense Department spokesman said.

The State Department, however, is delaying a decision on an Ethiopian request to dispatch a "specialized aircraft," one capable of searching for metal on the ground.

"We're still looking into it," said a State Department official, who requested anonymity. "We have concerns about the technical feasibility of what they've asked for, concerns about what would be appropriate in the particular geographic area."

A propeller plane was spotted Monday circling a field about 80

see LELAND, page A11

INDEX

Wednesday, August 9, 1989
Volume 8, Number 158
6 Sections, 60 Pages



GARNER / Page F2

Beltway / A6	Money / C1-10
Classified / F5-10	Movies / E6
Comics / B6-7	Nation / A3-6, C11
Commentary / F1-4	Obituaries / B4
Editorials / F2	Sports / D1-7
Federal / B5	Stocks / C4-9
Food life! / E7-9	Television / E4-5
Life! / E1-10	Top of News / A2
Lotteries / B2	Weather / D8
Metro / B1-4	World / A7-10